

Message Text

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SUBJ: RHODESIAN SITUATION: U.S. CITIZEN COMMENTS

1. CHARLES F. HAGAN CALLED ON OFFICER IN CHARGE PRETORIA ON MARCH 8 TO DISCUSS RHODESIA. HE IS US CITIZEN AND IDENTIFIED HIMSELF AS TEN YEAR RESIDENT OF SA WITH INVESTMENT BANKING BACKGROUND AND NOW IS IN BUSINESS FOR HIMSELF. DURING HIS RESIDENCE HE HAS BUILD UP WIDE SERIES OF CONTACTS WITH RHODESIANS, INCLUDING A NUMBER IN LEADERSHIP CIRCLES. HE WAS APPROACHING US, HE SAID, ON THEIR BEHALF AND WAS PREPARED LATER IF NOT AT PRESENT TO IDENTIFY THEM TO US. ONE ASSOCIATE HAD, HE SAID, 17 YEARS RHODESIAN ARMY EXPERIENCE FOLLOWED BY NINE IN RHODESIAN INTELLIGENCE.

2. HAGAN LED OFF WITH EXPOSITION OF MILITARY SITUATION AS SEEN BY SENIOR RHODESIAN MILITARY, ALL OF WHOM HAD COUNTERINSURGENCY EXPERIENCE IN MALAYA. PRESENT STRENGTH STANDING RHODESIAN ARMY IS 4,700 OFFICERS AND MEN. AIRCRAFT STRENGTH WAS 46 BUT IS NOW DOWN TO 42 PLANES. MOBILIZATION COULD PUT "SAY 47,000" INTO ACTION BUT AT COST OF WRECKING ECONOMY IN A FEW DAYS. WITH 3,200 KILOMETERS OF FRONTIER TO DEFEND AGAINST GUERRILLA INCURSIONS THE PROFESSIONALS FURTHER PERCEIVE A SHORT-TIME FUSE ON CURRENT SITUATION, NOT IN MONTHS OR YEARS, BUT IN WEEKS, AS CONSEQUENCE OF MOZAMBIQUE
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IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS AND INCREASING GUERRILLA ACTIVITY.

3. SECOND FACTOR WAS RISK OF DETERIORATING SITUATION IN ZAMBIA WITH POSSIBLE OUSTER OF KAUNDA AND HIS REPLACEMENT BY PRESENT ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL CHINKULA, SUPPORTED BY GREY ZULU AND SENIOR MILITARY STAFF WHO ARE ALL BEMBA TRIBESMEN AND MORE MILITANT THAN KAUNDA.

4. AT THE RHODESIAN CABINET LEVEL, THE FEELING WAS THAT SMITH HAD BEEN UNDER SUCH PRESSURE FOR SO LONG THAT HIS JUDGMENT WAS IMPAIRED. SMITH AND OTHER RHODESIAN FRONT LEADERS, HAGAN SAID, WERE CONVINCED THAT HAROLD WILSON HAD COLLABORATED WITH MACHEL IN MOZAMBIQUE'S IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS. AS A RESULT BRITISH HAD NO REAL ABILITY TO INFLUENCE SITUATION. HAGAN THEN SAID MAJOR ELEMENT IN SMITH'S HOLDING INTERNAL SITUATION TOGETHER WAS HIS ARGUMENT THAT WHITE RHODESIANS HAD NO OTHER PLACE TO GO AND HAD TO FOLLOW HIS BIDDING.

5. GROUP FOR WHICH HAGAN SAID HE WAS SPEAKING INCLUDES SEVERAL AT CABINET LEVEL WHO WERE GRAVELY CONCERNED AT COURSE OF EVENTS IN THE SMITH-NKOMO NEGOTIATIONS. THEY BELIEVED THAT SMITH COULD BE UNDERCUT IF THERE WERE INDICATION OF A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE IN FORM OF ASSISTED EMIGRATION THAT WOULD PERMIT THOSE RHODESIANS WHO DID NOT WISH TO STAY ON UNDER MAJORITY RULE TO LEAVE WITH A MODICUM OF THEIR ASSETS DURING A PERIOD OF UP TO PERHAPS ONE YEAR AFTER CHANGEOVER. SUCH A SCHEME WOULD UNDERCUT SMITH'S HARD-LINE STANCE AND THUS THEY COULD FORCE SMITH TO SIGN WITH NKOMO, HAGAN REPORTED. HE IDENTIFIED ONE "MUSSE" AS MAN TO PUT PRESSURE ON SMITH (COMMENT: POSSIBLY B.H. MUSSET LISTED AS MIN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IN 1974. END COMMENT.)

6. OF THE SOME 270,000 WHITES IN RHODESIA, I.E., ABOUT 40,000 FAMILIES, HAGAN ESTIMATED ABOUT 40 PERCENT WERE OF AFRIKANER ORIGIN ALMOST ENTIRELY IN AGRICULTURE. THIS GROUP, HAGAN CONSIDERED, WOULD REMAIN; THEY HAD IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES CLOSELY WITH THEIR FARMS AND SOIL. MOREOVER, THEY HAD LITTLE PROSPECT OF RETURNING TO SA BECAUSE PURCHASE PRICE OF FARMS IN SA WAS PROHIBITIVELY HIGH.
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SIMILARLY, MINING COMMUNITY WOULD REMAIN--AS THEY HAD DONE IN ZAMBIA.

7. IN AN ASIDE ON THE INTERNAL/EXTERNAL SPLIT OF ANC HE IDENTIFIED NKOMO AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF MATABELE TRIBE, LINKED TO ZULUS WITH A WARRIOR TRADITION, WHILE MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE WERE OF MASHONA STOCK WITH A PEACEFUL AGRICULTURAL TRADITION IN CONTRAST TO MATABELE, WHO

HOWEVER REPRESENTED ONLY 25 PERCENT OF BLACK POPULATION BUT BECAUSE OF THEIR BACKGROUND HAD A DOMINANT ROLE. HAGAN DID SAY THERE WERE ALSO SOME LURKING FEARS OF MATABELE-MASHONA CLASHES.

8. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ABOUT FORMER PRIME MINISTER, GARFIELD TODD RECENTLY RELEASED TEMPORARILY FROM HIS LONG BANNING TO VISIT FAMILY IN ENGLAND, HAGAN SAID THAT SMITH HAD FOOLISHLY MADE A MARTYR OF TODD, BUT BECAUSE OF ANTI-WILSON FEELING IN RHODESIAN CABINET, TODD WOULD BE OF NO USE EVEN AS MESSENGER.

9. IN DISCUSSING "ASSISTED EMIGRATION" HAGAN TALKED IN TERMS OF \$10-12 THOUSAND PER FAMILY WITH \$80-90 MILLION TOTAL WHICH WOULD COME FROM US, UK, AND COVERTLY FROM SAG. HE ENVISAGED US AS TAKING LEAD. OIC POINTED OUT TO HIM CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES REGARDING ANGOLA AID AND DISCOURAGED HIM FROM EXPECTING ANY QUICK ANSWERS.

10. OIC PERCEIVED NO INDICATION THAT GROUP HAGAN CLAIMED TO REPRESENT HAD PLANS TO DUMP SMITH. THEY MIGHT WISH TO HAVE HIS PRESTIGE BEHIND ANY AGREEMENT WITH NKOMO, BUT REPORTED CONCERNS OF THE MILITARY MAY HAVE SOME ROLE IN THEIR THINKING. HAGAN'S APPROACH WAS LOW KEY THROUGHOUT, AND OIC SAW NO REASON TO DOUBT HIS PURPORTED ROLE AS INTER-MEDIARY.

11. UNLESS DEPT INSTRUCTS US OTHERWISE, WE PLAN TO REPLY TO HAGAN ORALLY ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

A. RHODESIAN SITUATION IS PRIMARILY A BRITISH PROBLEM IN WHICH WE LOOK TO THE UK FOR ANY INITIATIVES IN SCHEME SUCH AS HAGAN SUGGESTS.

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B. WE CONTINUE TO BE DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN RHODESIA, AND APPRECIATE HIS COMING TO DISCUSS THE MATTER. OUR LONG HELD VIEW IS THAT MAJORITY RULE IS THE ONLY POSSIBLE EVENTUAL OUTCOME IN RHODESIA. SOME FORM OF MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE AGREEMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SEEMS TO US TO HOLD OUT THE BEST HOPE OF AVOIDING FURTHER AND MUCH MORE SERIOUS DETERIORATION OF THE SITUATION FOR ALL CONCERNED.
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